

KONAMI **SOFTWARE CLUB**

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

September, 1987

Issue No. 2

Even though it only seems like yesterday since the last newsletter was published, here we are again with the second issue of the KSC. We hope that you liked the first — if you did, just imagine what it'll be like in six months time!

In this and future issues we will be introducing key figure heads in the Konami world. This month we have the Software Sales manager, and president of the KSC, Luther De Gale ...

Luther De Gale ...

Konami Ltd was incorporated in 1984, as a platform for the company's coin-op activities, being the first Japanese arcade company to set up in Europe. Besides establishing a base, it also needed first hand information on assessing the MSX potential in the UK and Europe. *Track And Field* really thrust Konami to the forefront of the arcades, and, utilising this success, they were first to programme for the MSX. Luther De Gale assisted Kenji Hiraoka, founding director of the operation, and he was then designated Software Sales Manager when Kenji returned to Japan to manage all overseas subsidiaries. Luther spearheaded the MSX cartridge sales and distribution into Europe with unbounded enthusiasm and a large number of titles, many of which became household names and are still being purchased. Luther was determined to establish Konami as a major force on all popular formats, and slowly but surely developed the licensing of Konami conversions to reputable software houses, the most well known being Ocean. 'Konami's Coin Op Hits' was rated the best compilation by many consumer magazines, and is still selling well after 12 months.

Last year, Luther launched Konami's own label with resounding success on Spectrum, Commodore and Amstrad formats. Luther, like Konami, sees the future as very exciting. Their huge technical and creative resources are heralding new ideas for the 21st century, in business and entertainment software. Watch the future take shape!!

INSIDE:

Gryzor Review — Nemesis 2 and Track And Field reviews — Nintendo Games Console — Nemesis Playing Tips — News in Brief ...



Konami Helpline

The Konami Helpline is here for you to use so that you can ask us questions about your favourite games. We should be able to give you a helping hint for most games that will set you on your way again.

We will also be answering any queries that you have about the Konami Software Club, and letting you know about forthcoming releases on all machines. You can also find out all about the new titles by phoning after five and listening to the Helpline Hotline.

Tel: 0626 56789

Latest releases

Title: *Nemesis 2*
Machine: MSX
Format: 128K cartridge
Price: T.B.A.

Just when you thought it was safe to switch on your MSX, along comes *Nemesis 2* and your ideas of a peaceful weekend are thwarted!

After his unsuccessful invasion of the planet Nemesis, Doctor Venom and his Bacterion allies were exiled to a world called Sard. However, two years afterwards, in the Star Date 6666, it became obvious that Venom and his repulsive party had escaped, and that they were planning another assault on the planets. James Burton, and the ship, Metalion, a version of the Warp Rattler found in *Nemesis*, were despatched to crush this menace once and for all...

By taking the role of Burton, you must fly out in the ship to save your planet. There are seven levels to conquer, each one with different enemies to defeat and obstacles to dodge. Unfortunately, this is easier said than done!

Those of you familiar to the original *Nemesis* will instantly recognise the ship controls. Weapon selection is carried out in the same way, with you having to collect a specific amount of energy points for each power. Movement and firing of the ship are also identical to the original, although this doesn't derive from the enjoyment of *Nemesis 2*. In fact it adds to it, because it allows you to start playing straight away (not that you will get very far!).

What aren't familiar are the 'spritely' enemies. Quite a few new Bacterion ships have been introduced, and the end mother ships are really spectacular. Each level has a different ship at the end, and all have different weaponry. For example, some fire lightning, some shoot lasers (four at a time!), and on one level you have to defeat EIGHT of the original motherships from *Nemesis* as well as a flame throwing monster!

When you do destroy these 'pests', you can then attempt to capture some of its weapons by getting inside the ship before it explodes. If you are brave enough to do this then you will have to fly through the inside of the ship, avoiding a bombardment of mini-bacterions, and finally, reach the core. There are seven more powers to collect, which include up and down lasers, napalm missiles (very effective against dragons!), a fire blaster (looks, acts and sounds like a flame thrower), and a backbeam (fires backwards as well as forwards).

Each level is graphically different, with some wonderful colour and outstanding animation featured in every stage. There certainly isn't any lack of detail, and I reckon that these graphics rival, if not better anything yet seen on other eight bit machines. The pictures on the opening title screens, though, really top the lot. Just wait until you see Doc Venom — either you'll freak out or you'll pass out!

However, the sound is even more marvellous than the graphics! Konami, in all their wisdom and creativity, have included a custom designed sound chip inside the cartridge, giving it the edge over the original *Nemesis* music — from the arcade! Eight polyphonic voices help it along somewhat, meaning that you are given synthesized harpsicords, strumming guitars, staccato violins and stunning cosmic effects, along with the best set of digit drums that you will ever hear! Unbelievable, seeming that the effects heard simultaneously don't interrupt the music and are totally out of this world too! No longer do you have to envy the sounds from your local arcade — you can now have them blaring out of your own TV (Just spare a thought for the neighbours!).

I found that just watching the game was a real treat. It plays like a dream, and there's a lot to keep your eyes open for. *Nemesis 2* isn't one of your basic, scrolling shoot 'em ups — its origin may come from *Scramble*, but this is nothing short of sheer brilliance. It may be twice the price of a cassette game, but it's about ten times better than the best. Certainly worth every penny!

The PCW show preview!

The PCW show, regarded as the most important computer exhibition in Europe, sees thousands of computer enthusiasts flock to Olympia for the duration of its five days. This year it will be graced with the largest Konami stand yet, which will feature arcade games, new computer titles and our unique merchandise, along with representatives from both Konami Ltd and the Konami Software Club.

Situated around the Konami stand will be four fabulous arcade machines. These include *Jackal*, *Wec Le Mans*, *Iron Horse* and the classic *Salamander*, all of which will be on free play. *Wec Le Mans* will be in its original hydraulic cabinet too, which will keep racing fans happy!

New titles being announced at the show will be *Jackal* (Spec, Ams, C64 and Atari XL), *Iron Horse* (Spec, Ams, C64) and *Nemesis 2* (MSX). Although these will not be on sale, it is hoped that we will have demos of these running. There is a lot of excitement surrounding the conversion of *Salamander* for Christmas too, which will be followed by an, as yet, un-named compilation. More information should await you at the stand.

Konami's new range of T-shirts will be for sale at the show, though. The new merchandise includes designs from *Jackal*, *Iron Horse*, *Gryzor*, *Salamander*, *Combat School* and *The Maze of Galious*. They will all be retailing at £5.95, although, as KSC members, you can buy them for £4.95! To claim your discount, just come along and flash your membership card at us. It's as simple as that!

As well as Konami products, there will also be a collection of staff at the show. Anything you want to know about the club's ambitions or about future releases then you can come along and ask. I will be there, trying to smile (doesn't come easy you know!), and being kept busy taking in subscriptions. I bet I'm not allowed to play the games...

It looks like it's going to be an interesting show this year — let's hope it's a good one too!

News in Brief ...

'Flak Attack' — a new Konami arcade game will shortly be making its appearance in the U.K. You can rely upon us to bring you an in depth review in a forthcoming issue.

Negotiations are under way for Konami to distribute the new Nintendo titles in Britain. These will include *Gradius*, *Track And Field* and *Rush 'n' Attack*. No marks for spotting *Gradius* as *Nemesis*, and *Rush 'n' Attack* as *Green Beret*!

There is a possibility that *Nemesis 2* will be released on other formats in the future. Conversion details are being evaluated. Meanwhile, the original *Nemesis* is planned for release on 16 Bit machines.

Mr Hishikawa, the new president of Konami, will be attending the PCW show, on the Konami stand. He is an extremely approachable person, and is always willing to exchange ideas.

Review: The Nintendo Games Console

The games machine seems to be making a comeback, with two new consoles already making their mark on the computer world. This month, we take a look at the Nintendo console and give our opinions on its abilities.

The Basic pack (costing £100) contains a console, two joy-pads, and one game cartridge. If you are prepared to fork out another forty quid for the Deluxe Set, you'll also receive a robot (who acts as a second player), a Zapper Gun and two different cartridges (for use with the extra peripherals). Both packs are very impressive, but, never one being content with just looking, I set up the deluxe system, and saw, heard and played a bit more ...

The Zapper Gun was first to be tested, along with one of the cartridges provided with the deluxe set. The Zapper Gun proved to be accurate and a pleasure to use. It's easy to hold, and the sights, although hardly sophisticated, are useful. My only complaint is that the gun must be held DEAD straight at the screen when choosing a game. Not a major fault, but it can be annoying.

I must say, the gun performs realistically, and even the most experienced games player will find that using a gun is a little more difficult (and interesting) than using your standard joystick. However, this isn't a bad thing, as a gun requires more precision and practice to master, which will make you want to play a Zapper-related game even more!

The controller is one of those cursor pads, something which is included on most MSXs. This, combined with the size, helped me a lot when playing the games, but I'm not too sure how other computer users will react to them. In my experience, not too good, I'm afraid, but I do understand that Nintendo plan to release some traditional joysticks, so all is not bad!

Overall, the console isn't bad, but I would like to see some of their newer titles before I pass judgement. With games like *Gradius*, *Rush 'n' Attack*, and *Track 'n' Field* all promised soon I expect to be more impressed then (we hope to be carrying reviews in a future issue). For now, purchasing the Nintendo may be a little risky, as you may be stuck with another Coleco or similar. Only time will tell ...

Nemesis — the 2nd level!

Missiles and lasers are essential on this stage —without them you might as well kiss your Viper goodbye (but don't smudge the screen!). It's best to stay in the centre of the screen, avoiding the rocks, and moving back when the ground tanks shoot at you. The ships that home in on your craft are easily shot with the laser if you don't change your position. Once you reach the first set of bricks you must shoot, don't panic, just fire. If you have the laser then go for the on-coming Bacterions at the same time, as you'll clear a path for yourself through the pods (bricks, whatever!). This lark doesn't last too long, with only three sets to travel through, but if you aren't armed correctly then you may well fall foul of the enemy.

MSXers have the addition of secret bonus stages on their mega bit versions, and the first one is to be found on level two. It's on the third and final block of shootable bricks, down at the bottom. A little passage which leads to a dead end is the entrance. Guide your warp rattler through this and you'll shoot off towards a new bonus level (the double weapon is handy).

When the rest of you reach the screen where you're under attack from a lot of round blobs, stay at the far left and move up and down to shoot your adversaries. If any of the sprites do appear directly above or below you, then move forward just enough to avoid them and return to your original position afterwards.

The mothership should be dealt with as on all levels. You can destroy these by shooting them through the small hole in the centre of its frame, thus destroying its shields, and causing it to blow up when you have relieved it of all of its defences. It's best to repeat the shoot-and-move tactics, as then you have little chance of getting caught by its guns (lasers, options and speed help quite a bit!).

Konami Merchandise

Additions have been made to our T-shirt range making it the largest and best available to the games enthusiast. New dynamic designs are *Jackal*, *Iron Horse*, *Gryzor*, *Salamander*, *Combat School* and *The Maze of Galious*, which are added to our original *Nemesis* T-shirt. All are 50/50 washable, and are in FULL colour! The price is just £4.95 for KSC members which includes post and packing. The non-subscriber price is £5.95.

Orders should be sent to:

W&V Supplies,
Bank Buildings,
Bank Street,
Newton Abbot,
TQ12 2JL.

Chest measurements in inches please. Access/Barclaycard are accepted. Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to 'W & V Supplies'. Please allow 28 days for delivery.

Overseas customers please note: Payment can only be accepted in sterling drawn on a British bank, International Money order, or Access/Barclaycard.. Also, please add £1.05 to the price for Europe, Middle and Far East £3.05. All orders despatched by airmail ONLY.

Latest release

Title: Track 'n' Field

Machine: C64

Format: Cassette

Price: £9.99

Track And Field, the original multisports simulation, has finally found its way onto the C64. And what a conversion! It's the American version of four years ago, but it has lost none of the style either through the conversion or through the ages ...

The first event, being the 100m sprint, needs a quick burst of energy to finish in the qualifying time. The way to run, as most of you must remember, is to wiggle your joystick left and right. No task for the weak or limp wristed ...!

The long jump comes after this. It's not really very difficult but some people may find the timing for the angles a little bit of a problem. However, if you don't, jumps of 10m or further are actually feasible!

Tossing javelins is your next challenge, and this is a very faithful version of the same arcade event. The dead duck is featured in it, and although it has nothing whatsoever to do with athletics, it is a welcome piece of humour!

Running and leaping over sticks is next on the agenda. Yet again, the 110m calls for the wiggling of your joysticks, but I'm sure getting the record will be enough satisfaction!

After this comes Hammer Throwing, which is also a great copy from the arcade original. If anyone does reach this stage then they may well fail here on the first few attempts, as it requires a lot of concentration, and razor sharp reflexes to get a qualifying throw.

Finally there is the high jump (with emphasis on the high!). Yet again, practice makes (near!) perfect, with the control system being simple yet difficult to master.

Graphically, *Track And Field* is fine, with large colourful sprites, which have very lifelike animation. The backdrops scroll smoothly too, and the crowd jump up and down realistically. Sound effects and music resemble those from the arcade original, and very pleasant they are too!

Track And Field isn't the same type of game as the newer sports simulation, but it isn't made out to be. However, it doesn't need a multi load, it's an easy game to start (yet difficult to finish!) and above all, it's instantly enjoyable with lasting appeal. C64 owners will be pleased if they buy it!

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Gryzor arcade review

Gryzor is one of the latest Konami games to appear in the arcades, and it does no harm to their enviable reputation what-so-ever!

The game lets you take the part of a soldier who has to fight his way across various terrain, defeating enemies in an attempt to capture their base. Our hero has quite a lot to endure on his mission — racing through jungles, creeping through a labyrinth of caves, wading knee deep through a barren snow scene and scaling mountain sides is not my idea of fun! And, in *Gryzor*, it's not just a case of the guy on the screen doing all of the work — when he's climbing that mountain, it's up to you to stop him from slipping!

Fortunately, though, you're in control of a pretty resourceful character. In his possession he has a very destructive gun, which can be made even more powerful by collecting emblems which emerge from destroyed enemy pods. However, the opponents won't just stand there and let you shoot them, and their weapons match up to your own as well! I bet that you thought that just surviving the treacherous landscapes was bad enough!

If you can make it past the enemy's base, you are confronted with several electrical fences. To proceed you will have to shoot the power fields on the backwall, in an attempt to turn the fences off. Again, this is hard enough without a bombardment of flying objects shooting at you!

The next part is to destroy the main guardian, who is a rather grotesque looking brute (no relation though!). Patience is necessary, for, strong as your soldier is, he's going to have to give it more than his best shot to succeed. The next level looms large for anyone victorious ...

All of the backgrounds and sprites are very stylish and stunning in appearance. The animation and scrolling are smooth and quite impressive, as are the different movements of the characters. The sound effects and music rival most other sophisticated arcade machines, and compliment the game well.

Maybe running through a jungle might not suit you but in *Gryzor* this type of thing is fun! Crafty and original seems to sum this up perfectly. A totally unexpected game, but very welcome.

MSX Micros

It appears, from numerous telephone calls, that there are still a vast amount of would-be buyers of MSX machines. We are pleased to be able to report contacts with various distributors of MSX micros, so, if you are interested in purchasing one, then get in touch with us and we will put you in direct link with them.

Next Issue

Iron Horse — Arcade Review — Jackal — New Computer Release! — PCW What it was all about — Gryzor Competition!